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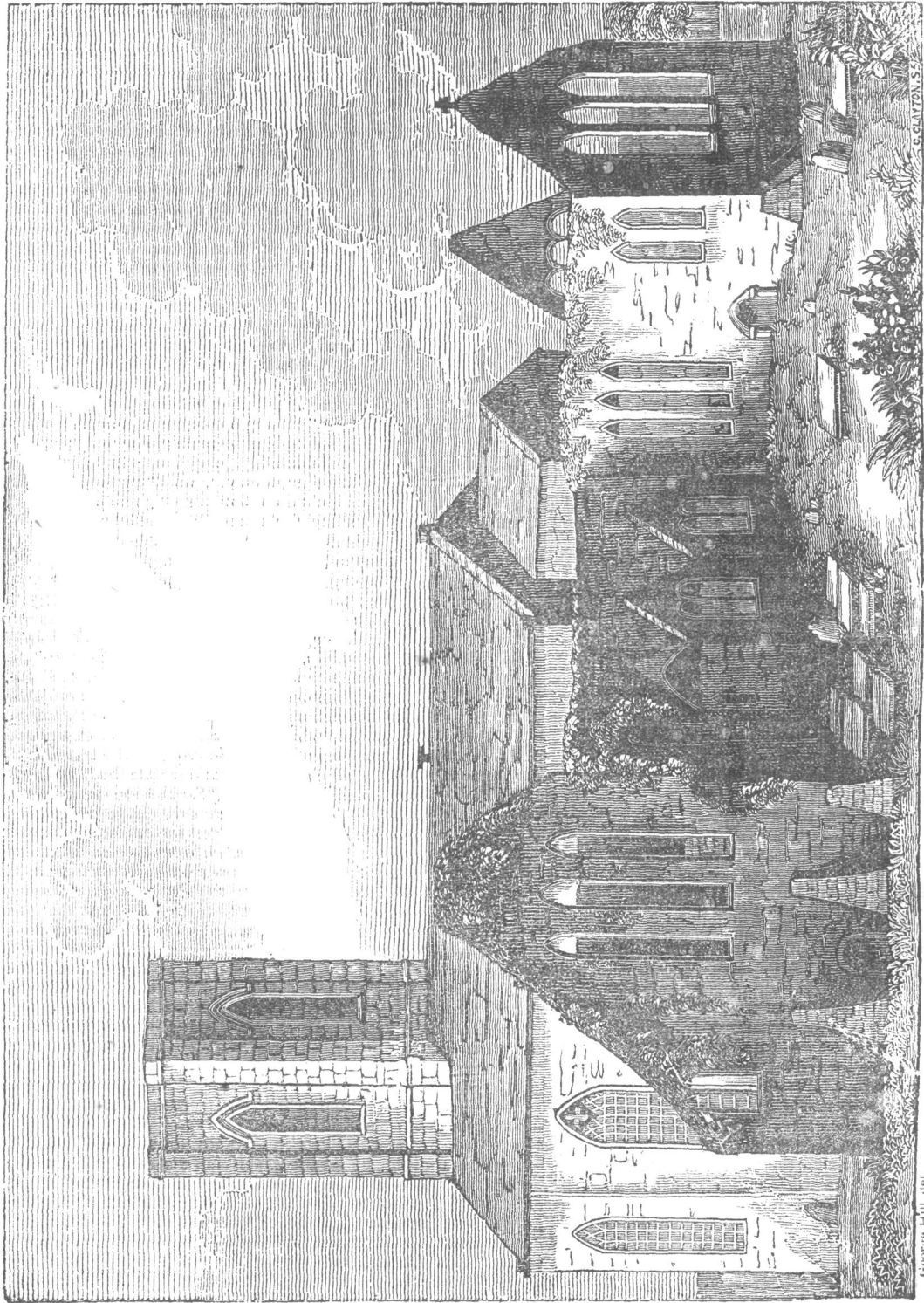
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ST. MARY'S CHURCH AND ABBEY, NEW ROSS.

CHURCH AND RUINS OF ST. MARY'S, NEW ROSS.

Few towns in the kingdom abound more in monastic ruins than New Ross, a beautiful town situated on the united streams of the Nore and Barrow, with their tributary waters, which, as it were, after inviting many fertile counties to pour their rich produce into their natural market or emporium, meet like faithful guides, who had before parted to direct others to the goal, and whose united testimony now affords confidence to the traveller. Ross is said to be the spot which nature had destined for that station, which is denied her by a stronger neighbouring interest, Waterford, "*Mantua, nœ miserae, nimum vicina Cremona*," and the cool apathy of those whose welfare is alike concerned.

The town rises an ascent on the eastern bank of the Barrow, whose waters here can float a ship of a thousand tons. A beautiful wooden bridge connects the town with the village of Rosbercon in the County of Kilkenny. The fine quay, about seven hundred yards in length, is terminated at either end by houses fronting each other, as if forbidding it to extend one foot farther; but industry and increasing intelligence will, in time, dash down these barriers, and afford that convenience her trade and commerce may require.

There is scarcely a spot in the town where the antiquarian will not find various monuments of monastic ruins—scarcely an excavation made, but some sculptured fragment is to be met with, or a subterranean passage discovered; and so plenty are these curiosities, that "money dreamers" seldom dig without a probability of meeting some relic or other. In making the new line of road along the river side, there was lately discovered a subterraneous passage excavated from the solid rock, and leading to the river. Various are the surmises respecting its intended use; the most probable is, that it was formed by smugglers, in former times, for the more secret landing of their booty.

There were several abbeys within the walls of the town, but they all shared the same fate which the rude hand of invaders, or the still ruder hand of time, have thought fit to bestow on many others in the country. One was situated at the northern, or St. John's gate, another at the southern, or Priory gate—the Abbey of St. Saviour's in Friars'-lane, and St. Mary's Abbey, which commands a view of the surrounding country, and overlooks the town from the eastern side, a view of which is given in the present number.

This building was so perfect as to admit of divine service being performed in it so late as the year 1811 or 1812, when the western aisle was injudiciously taken down to make room for the present church, which, compared to its ancient predecessor, is but a rude heap of stone and mortar. There is a cemetery under the pile, which extends, should we believe popular tradition, under the greater part of the town. However, certain it is, that archways have been discovered stretching in the direction of the abbey, and persons are somewhat deterred entering the cemetery, from the story of a soldier who once entered the "Black-hole," as the entrance is called, provided with a lantern, and accompanied by a dog. The dog returned, but his ill-fated master affords a lesson to the incautious antiquarian. Another story, equally believed, is told of some persons who attempted to take down the cross from the chancel wing, but whose brains were dashed out for their impious temerity. Underneath the cross are two slabs, of rude sculpture, supposed to represent these persons. Stone coffins have been found; but the most perfect monument, and the best specimen of bye-gone days, is the tomb of Rose Macroom, which is in the northern wing, and of which a correct drawing shall shortly be laid before the readers of the Journal.

An ancient story is told of the murder of the friars of St. Saviour's by some sailors or fishermen, who suspected them of an improper familiarity with their wives during their absence; and the vulgar point out the blood-like appearance on the stones, in the neighbourhood of that abbey's site, as the friars' blood, but which a mineralogist would perceive at once to be hematite.

They further believe, that the town is under a curse on this account, and that the sun never bestows a smile on it. I should have mentioned that this blood-like appearance is to be seen on the entrance to the "Black-hole," and he would be a great philosopher indeed who could to their minds explain the cause which produces the effect.

With respect to the curse, it would be set aside by the introduction of capital, the encouragement of manufactures, the employment of the poor, and the exertions of the proprietor of the town to induce a spirit of industry amongst its inhabitants.

G. H.

New Ross, August 1835.

A GHOST STORY.

The "Extraordinary Adventure" in your Journal of the 19th of October, reminds me of a similar story which I have heard told in former days.

Some years ago, a gentleman travelling in one of the central counties of Ireland, being benighted in a very lonely country, pushed on his horse to the residence of an acquaintance, which he understood was in the neighbourhood. He soon arrived at the gate, where, to his enquiries, the keeper answered through the bars, that the family were in Dublin, and had been there for three years, without having visited their country seat; the cause of this, he mysteriously hinted, was that the house was said to be haunted; indeed, he had himself heard the "spirits."—The traveller asked many questions, and learned that the "ghost" was heard every night walking through all the rooms of the house, making a noise like the clanking of chains; and this took place at midnight exactly; no one would, for any consideration, approach the house after nightfall. The traveller, however, must have some shelter; and, as he could obtain a lodging nowhere else, insisted on being admitted to the house; besides, he cared not for ghosts, he had seen many of them abroad, and he thought he could easily manage an Irish one. The steward, bewailing the stranger's obstinacy, at length opened the gate, and, giving the traveller's horse to his son, led the way to the house. The night was pitch dark, and the traveller saw nothing, till they arrived at the hall door, which indeed presented no very inviting aspect; it was hung on one hinge, and dashed to and fro with the wind; the light, shining through the doorway, dimly showed the hall, the appearance of which was equally repulsive; it was half filled with old lumber, which was covered with dust; and withal seemed so drear and gloomy that the traveller almost repented of his determination. He had not, however, much time for reflection, for the steward put the light in his hand, telling him he dare not go farther, and left him, pronouncing some prayers for his safety, mingled with which his guest thought he heard some indistinct mutterings. The traveller, now alone, traversed the hall, and by the second door on the right, entered a room, which, the keeper had informed him, was one of the least injured by neglect; its furniture had not been removed, and, contrasted with the hall, the apartment had an air of comfort which surprised him. He sat down, placing his light and pistols on the table before him. His mind for a while gave way to that indefinable species of mingled fear and curiosity, which can be conceived only by those who have been in similar circumstances. He soon, however, recovered his natural resolution; he felt some misgivings of the steward, which he had indeed from the beginning of this adventure, and which partly had encouraged him to proceed so far.

It was now twelve o'clock, and, as he listened intently, he thought he heard a faint and distant sound, like the clanking of a chain. Holding the candlestick in one hand, and a pistol in the other, he stepped into the hall. The noise seemed to approach, and now to die away; at one time it was above, and again it seemed to come from below. Again it drew near, and was evidently overhead; he went up stairs, examined the drawing-room floor, while the noise seemed to retire before him; he also searched the apartments above, without success; he descended again; the sound was louder; he followed it through se-